THE
Middle-Way.
OF
PERFECTION.

With Indifferency between

The ORTHODOX

AND THE

QUAKER.

By J.H.

Doing nothing by Partiality,

LONDON,

Printed for T. Parkhurst, at the Bible and Three Crowns in *Cheap-side*, 1674.

Of *Perfection.*

PErfection is one of the Doctrines of the Quaker, that there is *a ſtate of perfect ſeparation from ſin* in this life; That it is not onely poſſible for a man to keep the whole Law of God, but that every true Chriſtian doth attain it; That the work of Chriſts Redemption does conſiſt in this to bring men up to ſuch a ſtate, to be free not onely in regard of the *guilt*, but the *inhabitaton* of ſin, ſo that it is not indeed ſo much pardoned, as aboliſhed. There are no mean Doctors in the Schools have gone before them and taught us, that though there remain that which is *fomes peccati* (to uſe *Auguſtines* expreſſion); yet not that which is *peccatum* in the regenerate after Baptiſme, and conſequently the righteouſneſs which they through Chriſt (or grace) perform (the Quaker chooſes to call it Chriſts Righteouſneſs) being perfect, does not onely conſtitute them juſt in the ſight of God, but enables them to ſtand before the Throne of Gods juſtice, and ſo juſtifyes them and ſaves them. They now who are read here in the Controverſies between us and the Papiſts, may gueſs how far theſe friends are like to be ſupported; and that they are not therefore to be put off, as ſome think, with ſleighting and contempt onely. For my part, I will confeſs it is not the deſigne of theſe Papers to endeavour ſo much a refutation of any Party, as to build up others in that Truth which Errour on all ſides leanes upon. *Omne falſum innititur vero.* And as the beſt Phyſitians have been noted ſometimes to take

very great regard to the ordinary receipts of old women and the meaneſt perſons: ſo will it become the modeſt Divine, to endeavour rather to *diſcover* and ſift out that Truth which lies in his Adverſaries meaning, then to *expoſe*, and ſhame their Opinions.

Before I come to my preſent ſubject, it is neceſſary that I ſet a *little* out of my way, which may elſe engender diſpute, in my laſt paper. It is about pardon of ſin, which I take to be the *effect*, not *formal Reaſon* of juſtification. *Pardon* (ſayes Mr. Bradſhaw) *is neither the whole, nor any eſſential part of juſtification, but onely a contingent effect of it.* Treat. of Juſt. c. 8. That a man muſt repent and believe (which is to perform the condition of the Covenant of Grace), in order of nature, before he be pardoned, is out of queſtion. That God accounts the perſon a performer who is ſo, ariſes of neceſſity, becauſe his judgment is alwayes according to Truth. Now when Gods accounting a man Righteous according to the Covenant (which is all one with his accounting him a penitent Believer, or performer of the condition) is *juſtifying* him as I ſay there, and pardon followes this, it appeared to me that Remiſſion muſt not be the *form* it ſelf, or *part*, but the *effect* of juſtification. And it is true remiſſion is the effect, and no part of *this* juſtification: But there may be ſome *other* or further juſtification then this. To avoyd needleſs difference therefore with Brethren, I muſt diſtinguiſh juſtification. Juſtification we agree to be a forenſical act oppoſed to the laying any thing to a mans charge whereby he may be condemned. *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? It is God that juſtifieth.* Now there is a double charge, the charge of the *Law*, that we are ſinners, and ſo condemnable for violation of it: And the charge of the *Goſpel* that we have not performed the remedying condition which God requires of us for the eſcaping that condemnation. Though it be an acquittal of us from the *latter* charge is that juſtification which every man is ſo much concerned to provide for, as that which depends upon the plea of what himſelf does, and the acquittal of us from the *former*, depends onely on the plea of what Chriſt hath done for us, which can hardly ſuffer any debate I think before our Judge:

yet

yet will I not deny but juſtification may be taken ſo *compre henſively* as to contain in it our diſcharge from the *Law* alſo There is a juſtification then in regard to a *particular* charge, the charge of the *one*: or a *univerſal* juſtification againſt all accuſation, or the charge of *both*. As we muſt anſwer the charge of the Goſpel by denying that charge, and pleading our performance: we anſwer the charge of the Law by confeſſing it, and pleading Chriſts ſatisfaction; that is we acknowledge that we areguilty and have deſerved Death, but yet that we are not condemnable becauſe we are pardoned by the Law of Grace, through the Meritorious Righteouſneſs and Sacrifice of Chriſt Jeſus, ſuppoſing ſuch a Charge can find place before our Law-giver. Our Faith and Repentance is our Righteouſneſs in regard to the Goſpel: but pardon of ſin, together with this righteouſneſs, may go both into *Vniverſal* juſtification. I cannot indeed but ſay ſtill, that that juſtification which is *particular* in regard to the Goſpel Charge, ſeemes to me to be the juſtification which St. *Paul* and *James* mainly intend, if not altogether; for when the one ſayes we are *juſtified by Faith*, and the other *by works alſo*, and both prove it from one and the ſame Text, that *Abraham believed, and it was imputed to him for Righteouſneſs:* I pray what elſe can juſtification be with either, but Gods imputing evangelical obedience to a perſon for Righteouſneſs, that is Gods accounting of him righteous upon his believeing repenting, or performing the condition of the Goſpel? That the Apoſtles *Righteouſneſs without Works*, and *Pardon*, is not the ſame (and conſquently that the one is a probation and not a deſcription of the other as I noted upon reflection), muſt be granted by thoſe who make both theſe to be parts of our juſtification, for ſuch is the nature of parts to be diverſe one from another. *Hæc eſt natura partium ut unum corpus diverſa componant.* Boethius. de Conſ. l. 3. p. 3. Again *Quod a qualibet re diverſum eſt, id non eſt illud a quo intelligitur diverſum.* It muſt be alſo confeſſed by me, that the diverſity of *two* things, as the cauſe and effect, does not hinder thoſe things to be parts of another *third* which is the *compoſitum* of both: and conſquently that Gods juſtifiying us by this *Righteouſneſs* (that is by *Faith* or Evangelical Obedi-

ence, *without the Works of the Law*), and then pardoning us, as the effect of that act, may both make up the *compositum* of *Universal* justification. You see how tender I am of persisting in any mistake, wherein I have or may prejudice others. I doe not find that the Scripture does denominate or pronounce any one *righteous* or *a just Man* from one end to the other, upon any other account then his *doing Righteousness*, yet will I not quarrel with any that say, we are made righteous also by forgiveness; and that the delivery of us from sin, from the Law, and condemnation by it, is *Justification*: Though really I am apt to think, that this work is to be attributed rather with the Apostle, to our *Redemption*. Compare *Ephes.* 1. 7. 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. *Rom.* 3. 24. with other places. And so I come to my point, of *Perfection*. Onely I must adde this Corollary. *Simplicissimum nobis videtur si dicamus, fidem justificare, quia credenti sua fides imputetur ad justitiam. Fides autem ad justitiam imputari dicitur, quia Deus illum qui viva fide in Christum credit pro justo habet & reputat, eum a pœna peccati liberans, & ad vitam æternam acceptans, propter Christi mortem & obedientiam.*

It is to be acknowledged, that there are, and may be very many Scriptures easily pressed by the Quaker and Papist for the service of their Doctrine, so that there is no doubt but thus much is proved; that it is our duty to be as *perfect* as they would have. Every sin is forbidden, and every good thing that is so by the Law of innocency, is commanded. But it is one thing to know what is our duty, and another what will be accepted of God in our performance. Our duty is one thing, and what we can, or doe attain to, another. God brings not his *scales* under the Covenant of Grace, that our works should have their full weight, but his *touchstone* expecting they be right, that they proceed onely from a sincere heart, and then he accepts them upon the merits of Christ Jesus. Nay indeed the *Duty* of the Gospel is one thing, and the *Condition* of it another.

The words *perfect* and *perfection* in several places of Scripture, may receive an interpretation according to the purpose unto which they are applied. *As many as are perfect, let us be*

thus

thus minded. By perfection there, I apprehend such a degree of knowledge, as the *strong* Christian is supposed to have otherwhere in opposition to the *weake*, who understanding not their liberty by the Gospel were scandalized about indifferent things, and so could not walk up to the same rule. *Not that I had already attained* (sayes the same Apostle hard by) *or were already perfect.* In the one verse of the same Chapter he is perfect, in the other he is not; wherein yet there is no more real difficulty then this, that a man may in *one thing* be said to be perfect, who in *another* is imperfect, which *Augustine* shewes in the fifteenth chapter of his second book, *De peccatorum meritis & remissione.*

Indeed that Father in that book and in another, *De spiritu & littera,* hath the luck to treat industriously on this matter. *Alia est quæstio* (sayes he) *utrum esse possit homo in hac vita sine peccato: alia utrum sit? It is one question, whether it be possible for a man to attain to such perfection as to live without sin? and another, whether there be any that doe?* For the former question, he distinguishes of what is possible by *Grace*: And what is possible by our *own Strength.* To hold, that any man by his free will onely without grace is able to keep all Gods commandements and be without sin, is that grand Pelagian Doctrine against which he sets his face, and detests it: But that it is possible to attaine this by *grace*, or the special assistance of Gods Spirit, he thinks it best (it seemes) to grant. He thinks it not fit, not safe, to say any (or all) of Gods Commandements are impossible. Besides, where God vouchsafes his grace, the work (he pleads) is to be ascribed to him unto whom *nothing is impossible.* For the second question, whether there is or ever was any man upon earth (Christ onely excepted) that does, or did attain hereunto (how great a measure of grace soever it be which he has or had), he is peremtory in the denyal, as full in his proof from Scripture, there being several things (he sayes) which are *possible*, and yet never shall *be* in the World.

There is no doubt now but in the dispute between the Quaker and us the terme *perfection* is understood alike. It is a perfection they hold in reference to the whole life, that a man sins

not. And if any in the diſpute do carry the matter ſo high againſt them, as to deny what they contend for, to be *poſſible*, they may if they pleaſe chooſe more warineſs from St. *Auſtine*, for the Quaker aſcribes not to themſelves, but to the *Spirit*, the *life*, the *power*, or to *Chriſt within*, all that they doe. On the contrary ſide, if theſe Friends will not be content with what is allowed them, that our duty reaches ſo far as not to ſin at all (and conſequently to be perfect as the Saints in Heaven, that is, to be in our kind as God in his, is perfect), and that it be not denied (when we cannot grant) that this our whole duty is *poſſible* through that ſpirit by which I hope ſome of them are lead: but they will go on further to ſay, that themſelves are ſuch as *have attained*, and that every one who does not attain to the ſame pitch, to wit, to live without ſin, cannot be in a ſtate of Grace and Salvation, I ſhall think it time to ſend them, if they be learned, to the ſame Father and Books, for their reproof and ſatisfaction. As for my thoughts farther of this *impoſſibility*, and what diſtinction is here wanting, you may ſee (p. 12. & 19.) in my firſt paper of *Election*.

It is common indeed for the Scripture to ſpeak of men and women as perfect. *Mark the perfect Man.* Noah was a *perfect man*. Job a *perfect man*. The good Kings are ſaid to walk before God with a *perfect heart*, when yet their failings are recorded in the ſame chapter. It is leſs wonder, to have onr duty ſet forth in this manner. *Thou ſhalt be perfect with thy Lord thy God*. Let us *go on unto perfection*. Walk before me and *be perfect*. Thou ſhalt love the Lord with *all thy heart, with all thy ſoul, with all thy ſtrength*. Thy Will be done in Earth as it is done *in Heaven*. Be followers of Chriſt. And as *his* was, ſo muſt our *converſation be in the world*. There is no man hath a ſenſible knowledge of himſelf, but he perceives dayly how far his *duty* is above his *performance*. I am not ignorant neither, how ſome Texts may be drawn out of their ſence, where the place muſt give them a right conſtruction. *By one Offering* (ſayes the Apoſtle) *Chriſt hath perfected them that are ſanctified*: But we are not to conceive that at *once* therefore he perfects mans ſanctification. I deny not moreover, but the end of Chriſts manifeſtation in the fleſh, was to *redeem us from iniquity*, to

deſtroy

deſtroy the Works of the Devil, to reſtore us out of ſin and unrighteouſneſs, and *preſent us unto God*, as a *peculiar People*, *Puriſied by Faith*, *Zealous of good Works*, *Holy and without blame*, *Entire and wanting nothing*, *Perfect and compleat in all the Will of God*. I will not cite here thoſe abundance of Texts which are at my pens end, leaſt it ſhould engage me to a particular diſcourſe concerning them. It will ſuffice in the general that we diſtinguiſh of the *time*, and of the *perfection* which is to be underſtood in ſuch ſeveral places.

I do remember when the Donatiſts are pleading, many of the ſame and the like Scriptures for their Church and ſeparation, this is one anſwer the Orthodox offer them. There are *duo tempora Eccleſiæ* (ſay they) *quæ nunc eſt: & qualis erit. Illa divina Teſtimonia quibus commendatur eccleſia cum malorum commixtione hoc tempus ejus ſignificat qualis eſt in præſenti ſæculo: & illa teſtimonia quibus commendatur non habere commixtos malos, illud ejus tempus, qualis venturo ſæculo in æternum futura eſt! See Breviculi collationum cum Donatiſtis.* I ſhall ſay the ſame here. There are two Times or States of the Church. The ſtate of this *preſent life*, and the ſtate of the *life to come*. We doubt not but Chriſt hath purchaſed for his Church and People ſuch a ſtate as is to be without ſin, as well as without miſery: But this ſtate which is *compleating* alway, muſt not be expected to be *compleated* till the other life. When Chriſt ſhall preſent her to his Father, a *glorious* Church then ſhall ſhe be, without *ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing*: but while ſhe is but a *gracious Church*, that is, while ſhe is in this life, ſhe ſhall not be without her wrinkles nor her troubles. We ſhall reconcile the Scripture very well, if when it ſets forth every man as a ſinner, that ſtands in need of remiſſion every day, we refer ſuch Texts as ſpeak indeed of perfect freedom, unto the ſtate of the life to come.

In the firſt place then, there is *perfectio viæ, or patriæ*; *viatorum*, or *comprehenſorum*, to uſe the terms of the Schools. A perfection belonging to the ſtate while we are in the way, as travellours: or a perfection belonging to the ſtate when we ſhall get home, or to our Countrey, or to ſuch as have *already attained*, in St. *Pauls* terms. I hope the Quaker that diſputes

with us about *Perfection*, will acknowledge a difference in regard of attainment between the two estates of *Grace* and *Glory*. And if that *perfection* which consists in a freedom from all sin does remain for the Rest above, I see not who the man is, that can free himself from all *sinful imperfection*, in this World. *I press forward* (says the Apostle) *if by any meanes I might attain unto the Resurrection of the Dead*. Such a Perfection belike as that *in Heaven* is his duty, but he can by no meanes here *attaine* unto it.

In the next place then, that *Perfection* which belongs to the state of this Life is to be considered in the *kind*, and in the *degrees* of it. There is a Perfection of the *kind*: and of the *degree*. I do not find any of these friends in their writings do take Perfection for a *superlative* Word; They acknowledge *degrees* in their Perfecton, that one hath more of the light and life then another. There are *Fathers*, *young Men*, *and Children* in Grace, as St. *John* speaks. The Child hath a perfection of parts, that is, hath all its Members, as well as the growen man, but not at the same maturity. Now I would faine know of the judicious among this sect two things in my way. The one, whether that degree of Holiness which is attained by any man, is not the duty of every man? The other, whether he that fails in the least of what is his Duty, does not sin? The rule is but one to all: and sin is any want of conformity to that Rule. However in this, we may both come to an accord. They will yeild to us, that there is a perfection of *degree* which they have not attained, or that there are more degrees still to be sought, so long as they expect another state above in Glory: And we do not deny to them that perfection in its *kind*, which every man (we hold as well as they) does, and must attaine unto, that is saved. The great difficulty will be onely in a right understanding of what *kind* of perfection it is, which is to be agreed upon by both.

In the way for the understanding whereof, I must lay down this note, that when the Scripture speaks of any good man or woman that *fears God*, or walk *righteously*; it is all one in Holy Language as the being *Perfect* is. *Noah* is said to be a just Man and *perfect* and one that walked with God. *Job* a man

man perfect and upright, and one that feared God and eſchewed evil. To be a juſt Man then, a righteous man, a man that fears God, is in Scripture to be a perfect man: and to be a perfect man is to be a juſt man, a righteous man, one that fears God and eſchews evil. They are terms I ſay æquivalent in Scripture account. *Bleſſed is the Man that walketh not in the Council of the ungodly, nor ſtandeth in the way of Sinners.* The man that walketh not in the Council or way of the wicked, is *the perfect man*, in other places of the Pſalmes. It is a full deſcription, that we have of *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*. *They were both Righteous before God, walking in all the commandements and ordinances of the Lord blameleſs.* Now if theſe friends will be contented with ſuch a Perfection in its *kind* as was in *Noah*, in *Job*, in *Jacob*, in *Abraham*, in the good Kings, the Prophets, in the Church of Corinth (1 *Cor.* 2. 6.) Coloſſe. (*Col.* 1. 28.), in *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*, and is indeed in every man and woman once Converted, differing nevertheleſs in *degree* one above another, then ſhall we and they in the end be lead to a perfect accomodation.

There is in the laſt place therefore, a double *kind* of that Perfection which belongs to the ſtate of this life. A Perfection according to the *covenant of Nature*: and a perfection according to the *Covenant of Grace*. When God made his Creatures, he appointed an order for them, in reference to which they are all ſaid to obey the Law of their Creation. Man being endued with a reaſonable Soul muſt have the knowledge of this Law, ſo far as concerns his part in it, and conſequently his reaſon alone could direct him every thing whatſoever (except of poſitive inſtitution) he was to do in order to that end unto which he was Created. Upon this does ariſe the Law of Nature, which when he was to obſerve as the condition of his Happineſs and Gods favour, or the continuance of both, that law muſt be alſo a Covenant, and that is the Covenant of Nature or Works. This Covenant being broken, and we rendred too impotent for it, it pleaſed God for Chriſts ſake to vouchſafe another, wherein he propoſes his favour and life upon lower Terms as is ſuitable to our falen ſtate. Now as a conformity to the Covenant of *Nature* is mans Righteouſneſs, and when there is no flaw therein his

Perfection according to *that* Covenant: so a conformity to the terms of *Grace* is our righteousness according to *this* Covenant; and when there is nothing wanting in our coming up fully to those terms (as if there be, it will not serve our turn), it must be our perfection. And here then is that Perfection upon which we are to be reconciled. Not a perfection which consists in doing every thing in the Earth we are bound to do: but a perfection that notwithstanding our many failings, is not wanting in coming up to the Terms which God accepts for Righteousness to everlasting Salvation, in the Covenant of the Gospel. There is a *Righteousness of God* declared or set forth under the new Testament in opposition to *Works* (which I have mentioned in my Paper of *Justification*, and explained to my content in my last paper of the *Covenants*), and it is according to this Righteousness, the World is to know, that the Scripture speaks (N B), when it makes *Noah*, *Job*, *Daniel*, *Zachary* or any other, just men, righteous men, and perfect men in the sight of God: When else, there is no *flesh* before the infinite Holiness that is *clean*, or that could be justified and stand in judgment.

Hear O House of Israel, is not my wayes equal? When the wicked turneth from his wickedness and doeth that which is Lawful and right he shall save his Soul. This is said to be equal with God. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Not onely merciful, but just. In like manner, *God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love which ye have shewn towards his Name.* Again, *it is a righteous thing with God to recompence to you who are troubled rest when Christ shall be revealed from Heaven.* Henceforth there is laid up for me *a Crown of Righteousness which the Righteous God shall give me.* If God, it seemes, from such Scriptures as these, should put no difference between the penitent sinner and others, he would not be righteous according to that righteousness which is ascribed to him in these and the like places, although if he should destroy the world for one transgression, we could not accuse him of wrong in the sense of some others. Of what value then that notion about this *Righteousness of God* which after many years thoughts I have offered, in the said two former papers (p. 26. 27. &c. of the

one

one: p. 7. 8 &c. of the other) I leave to Time (when it hath brought the ſame light into ſome other more authoritative pen, that is to forget from whence it came) to make the diſcovery, and improvement. I will adde but thus much more, by way of ſurpluſage to it. *Juſtitiam in Deo ſacra Scriptura ſæpe nominat condecentiam bonitatis ipſius, ut Scholaſtici loquuntur: & Deum juſtum vocat, quum facit ea quæ congruunt ejus ſapientiæ, æquitati & benignitati.*

There is no man ſinneth not, ſayes *Solomon*, in his Prayer at the Dedication of the Temple. This he enlarges in his Eccleſiaſtes. *There is not a juſt man upon Earth, that doeth good and ſinneth not.* The Apoſtle to the Romans confirms this out of the Pſalmes; *There is none that doeth good, no not one.* St. *James* likewiſe gives his Suffrage. *In many things we offend all.* And St. *John* is yet moſt poſitive. *If we ſay we have no ſin we deceive our ſelves, and the truth is not in us.* On the other ſide, *He that committeth ſin* (ſayes the ſame Apoſtle) *is of the Devil.* He that is *born of God keepeth himſelf that the wicked one toucheth him not.* Whoſoever is *born of God doeth not commit ſin: For his Seed remaineth in him, and he cannot ſin, becauſe he is born of God.* St. Auguſtine I remember in ſeveral places of his Books does lay ſome two or three of theſe Texts together, and offers us this ſolution. *That which is born of God* (ſayes he) *ſins not.* Which is as much as to ſay, There is *that* which is *born* of God in the true Chriſtian, and that which is *not* born of him. In other terms, no man is regenerate but in part, or ſanctified but in part. Not as if one faculty was ſanctified, and not another: But there remaines the principle of Corruption, together with the principle of Grace which is infuſed, that is both fleſh and Spirit, in the ſame perſon: And whatſoever proceeds from the one cannot be (n, as whatſoever proceeds from the other cannot be otherwiſe. I will adde, According to the prevalency there is of any of theſe two principles in the ſoul, ſo is the perſon to have his denomination. The Apoſtle therefore ſpeaking of himſelf when he *did* the evil he *would not*, it is *no more* I (ſays he) *that* does it, *but ſin that dwelleth in me.* If it be not *he* then that does it, the perſon being denominated from the will, and more generally pre-

ling part) is said to *sin not*. And this I take it, after *Austine*, is ordinarily received by Divines. Nevertheless, that which I propose here from what is said, seems to me to be more clear and weighty. There are some Texts say that all men are sinners, and others that the regenerated do *not sin*, and the blood of Christ *cleanseth us from all sin*. I distinguish then of sin. Sin is the Transgression of a Law, and as there is a twofold Law, so is there a twofold Transgression. There is the transgression of the *Law of Works*: Or the transgression of the *Law of Faith*. Every man upon Earth does sin against the Law of Works, in leaving undone what it requires, or doing what it forbids in Thought, Word or Deed, even *continually*; but there is no man sins against the Law of Grace, so, as to leave undone what that requires as the condition of life, who is saved. It is true, that as *all Power is committed to the Son*, the Law of Nature is put into Christs hands to be commanded by him, which together with remedying Grace, are parts of his Law. Distinguish therefore between sinning against one or other Precept of Christs Law: and sinning against it as a conditional Covenant, by *nonperformance*.

It will be for profit, yet, to multiply the same matter. *If thou wilt enter into Life* (says Christ) *keep the Commandements*. Neithe *Circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth any thing* (says the Apostle) but *Faith working by love* in one place, but *a new Creature* in another, but *the keeping the Commandements of God* in a third. *Do we make void the Law through Faith? No, we established it*. That the *Righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*. *The Doers of the Law shall be justified*. It appears by multitudes of such Scriptures as these, that the Law, or commandements of God are to be kept or fulfilled; that the fulfilling them is required as necessary to the person justified, and consequently as the condition (which is all one) of pardon and life. To help us out here therefore, we must distinguish after our more sober and best Divines; The Law of God may be considered *rigidly*, καὶ ἀκριβῶς: or *not rigidly*, καὶ ἐπιεικεία, that is, with condescention to human frailty, according to the *measure* in every one *of the gift of Christ*, or according to *our Model*, strength or grace in this Life, & that degree of performance

formance God which requires of us, precisely in the new Covenant, to the obtaining Salvation. It is in the *latter* the *mild* the *gracious*, not in the *former* the *rigid* sense, that such Texts are to be interpreted; that the Law or Commandements are fulfilled; and that the observation is made *necessary* to the justified and saved. That is, I say again, not according to the *model* of our state of *innocency*, but *faln* estate; not according to the *Rigour* of the Law, but *Equity* of the Gospel; not according to the tale of Brick or prescript of *Do this and live*, but according to Gods merciful acceptation of what we do through the meritorious obedience and oblation of Christ Jesus. I must bring this yet more home. As the Law is taken for the Law moral or Law of Nature, the matter of the Commandement, is the same (I have said) in the Law of Christ, Grace and Gospel, as in the law of Works: onely this *materia præcepti*, this matter required, may be considered as *materia absoluta*, or *conditionata*, as our *duty*, or as the *condition* of Salvation. There is no man keeps the Commandements of Christ so as never to faile in any thing of his *duty*: But every Child of God keeps them so as they are made the *condition* of Life in the new Covenant. When a man then performes the Covenant, he must be judged Righteous according to that Covenant. As there is nothing lacking in that performance to the Terms, he is Perfect; and as he is Righteous and Perfect, he *sins not*; that is, he failes not of what is required to the performance of the condition. When St. *John* therefore speaks of *sinning not*, we may observe how he counterpoises *committing sin* with being *Righteous* or *doing Righteousness* in the same Chapter. The true Christian *sins not* so as opposes his *being Righteous*, he *commits not sin*, as is contradictory to *doing Righteousness*. He is Righteous now we know, or doeth Righteousness, onely in regard to the Covenant of Grace, and he *sins not* accordingly, in regard to this Covenant; that is (as I sum all up), failes not in the performance of the condition. He performs not *materiam absolutam*, the whole *duty*, but he performes *materiam conditionatam*, the whole *condition* of the Gospel.

By the way here, when the calm Protestant will grant to the Papists such a fulfilling of the Law as does constitute a real true righteousness

righteouſneſs, and that which is perfect or entire according to the covenant of grace, and ſo accepted of God unto Life: and the moſt violent Papiſts will grant to the Proteſtant that this righteouſneſs nevertheleſs (*ſuo modo perfecta, non omni prorſus caret peccato, ideoq; ex hac parte perfectu non eſt*) is not without all Sin, but doeth both faile in the degree which the Law exacts, and is intermingled with many at leaſt venial tranſgreſſions, ſo that it cannot abide Gods diſtrict judgment according to the Law of works, without need of Chriſts merits & Gods mercy, who does not ſee an agreement in the *purpoſe* and *mind*, where there is yet ſo much variance in the *words* and *pens* of thoſe that contend about thoſe matters? That Juſtification is a diſpute of the like nature and iſſue, I doubt not; and it is an excellent pretty book of Mr. *Bradſhawes* on that ſubject, yet does he ſeem to me, not to have touched this main thing, which I have noted once and again in my former papers to be that, the want of the notice whereof hath ſet the *Papiſt* and us together by the ears, and the underſtanding whereof will as preſently heal our Controverſies: to wit, That it is not by the *Law of works*, but by the *Law of Grace* that we are judged, when we ſtand before Gods Bar for Juſtification. There are but two things to be pleaded (ſayes that worthy Authour) by an accuſed perſon. Either that he hath not committed the fault: or that he hath ſatisfyed for it. *No mortal* (ſays he) *can deviſe any other medium whereby ſuch a perſon ſhould be juſtifyed.* Our practical Divines do accordingly thunder againſt ſelf Righteouſneſs upon this foundation. If we ſtand on our own Righteouſneſs (ſay they) then muſt we be able to ſatisfy God for our former ſins, and cleanſe our hearts for the time to come ſo as to be perfect in his ſight. But this is a miſtake. That there is a righteouſneſs of ours that we muſt not wholly caſt away in our Juſtification, appeares from the Pſalmiſt, when he tells us by the rule of contrarys, that it is the *righteous* and the righteous onely, that ſhall *ſtand in Judgment*. There is a third plea therefore, which is the onely true plea which muſt be brought, and made good or we periſh; and that is, not that we are faultleſs or perfect according to the law of works (either in our ſelves or another): but that we are juſtifyable by the covenant of mercy

as

as performers of the condition, and that this righteouſs though imperfect is acceptable through the merits of our Redeemer. For the buſines then of Satisfaction, it muſt be treated a little otherwiſe then Mr. *Bradſhaw* does it, and others, that is, not to be made the matter, or formal reaſon, of that righteouſneſs that juſtifyes us (let me ſay, the *whole* matter or formal reaſon, for I may be out elſe on the otherſide ſeeing *Chriſts merits*, our *faith* or evangelical obedience, and *pardon* have all their proper parts and office in it): but it muſt be underſtood mainly to ſerve the honour and juſtice of God, as Rector and Law giver, in regard to his dealing with us otherwiſe then according to the Law of our creation as elſe he was bound: for upon this ſcore were the ſufferings of Chriſt *penall*, and undergone in *our ſtead*, to wit, that *by meanes of death for the redemption of us from the tranſgreſſions of the firſt Covenant*, a new Law or Covenant might be brought in, according to which we are to be judged. And when it is at that bar we muſt ſtand, we eaſily know both what that righteouſueſs is which muſt be pleaded, and for whoſe worthyneſs ſake (ſo inconſiderable otherwiſe as it is) it ſhall be accepted unto remiſſion and life everlaſting.

To return, the Apoſtle ſpeaking of the Law does tell us, that he that breakes but *one of the commandements* is guilty of all; and the reaſon he renders is, becauſe he requires that *one*, that required the *reſt*. The meaning is, God gave his whole Law to man for a Covenant, and if one part onely be tranſgreſſed, the condition of that covenant is broken as well as if all were tranſgreſſed. For otherwiſe, he that hath layen with a woman is not therefore to be accuſed for mnrder; nor he that hath ſworn an oath, is therefore guilty of theft. We muſt underſtand the like in reference to the Law of faith, or covenant of grace, and its obſervation. Let a mans ſins be what they will, ſo long as the condition be performed, he may according to this Law be judged no tranſgreſſour. In the one, a man hath committed no theft no adultery nor idolatry, and yet in the ſenſe of the Apoſtle he is *guilty of all*, In the other he hath bin an idolater, an adulterer, a thief (*ſuch were ſome of you but you, are juſtified*), and he is guilty of none. The reaſon in both I ſay is, the condition ſtill in the *one* is broken, but performed in the *other*. As we

distinguish of the Law, *Quâ fadus, & Quâ regula*: so may we of the performance, *Sub genere officii, & Sub genere conditionis*. Though we fail in our *Duty*, we fulfill the *Condition*, as have said already.

To this purpose, it is not to be forgotten what is said of *David*, that *his heart was perfect, that he kept Gods Commandements, and that he sinned not but in the matter of* Uriah. And how I pray was that? Do not we read of *Davids* Passion, his Lying, his Numbring the people, his dealing with *Mephibosheth*? was there no sin indeed that *David* did commit besides this? what makes him then complain so much, that he was *born in Iniquity*, and that his *sins were more than the hairs upon his head?* I answer, there are sins consistent with sincerity, and inconsistent with it. Sins inconsistent with sincerity are breaches both of the Law of Works, and Covenant of Grace, and that *sub ratione conditionis*: Sins consistent with it, are transgressions indeed of the Law, but *sub hac ratione*, no breach of this Covenant. *Davids* sins of the first sort were very many, and his acknowledgments pious and true: *Davids* sins of the latter sort was but only in that matter, and otherwise it is said that he *sinned not*. To be clear as I goe, even for *that matter*, As *I* have distinguished between the breach of our *duty*, and the *condition*; or of the *preceptive* part of the law of grace, and the *conditional*: So must *I* distinguish *this breach of the condition*, into that which may be *pro tempore*, making the punishment so far due, as that God may cut off the Sinner and damne him: or else *final* also, making it peremptorily and remediless due, which will be ever executed by him. *There is a sin unto death, and a sin not unto death*, says the Apostle. A sin *against the Holy Ghost*. Whatsoever instance there may be, in which such a sin hath been committed, as in the obstinacy of the *Jews* against Christ, that rather than they would believe, they would impute his Miracles to the Devil, the general nature of this sin does lye in this, that it is such, as is inconsistent with, and exclusive of the performance of the terms which are required unto pardon and life. The *Spirit* and *New Testament* are one, and this is to sin (*N. B.*) against the *New Testament*. *De peccato ad mortem quoniam non expressum est, possunt diversa sentiri; Ego autem dico id esse peccatum*,

tum, fidem quæ per dilectionem operatur deserere usq; ad mortem. Concerning the sin unto death, because it is not expressed, divers things may be thought of it; but I say that sin is this, to desert (or never come up to) *that faith which worketh by love, unto death.* Augustine. *De Cor. & gra.* c. 12. It must be demanded then, what shall we think of *David in the matter*, wherein he is accounted to have *sinned? I* say that *David* (according to our Brittish Divines in the Synod of *Dort*) in that present state, could not have been saved, if he had died: but God having Elected *David*, provided Repentance for him, that he could not dye in that estate. There is a sin therefore which is inconsistent with sincerity of heart, or the terms of grace, at *present*; or such a sin, or sins, which are *exclusive* of it. This *I* said in other words but now. The latter only are sins unto death. The breach of the Covenant of grace *sub ratione conditionis* is that sin, and when final, that alone which is unpardonable. *I* reassume, that whatsoever sins consequently, they be which any man commits, if they be not such as are incompatible with Sincerity, Repentance, and Faith, they are sins against the Law, and our pardon is purchased: but they are no breach (*sub hac ratione, I* must intend still) of the Law of Grace, no sin unto death, or no sin as can hinder the person from being judged as *righteous* by that Law or Covenant, and to be accepted accordingly unto everlasting Salvation.

And now Sirs! Behold here a kind of Heaven opened to you, *I* mean to you who are the Children of God, and fear his Name, where all your sins and iniquities are removed, and where every one of you are *righteous* and *perfect* and *sin not*. For this is the benefit and fruit of Christs Death and Redemption, that he hath delivered you from that Law which you break, and would condemn you for every breach; and he hath brought you under a new Law, the Law of Grace, which requires nothing of you, but what *sub rat one Conditionis* you do keep, for he gives his holy Spirit herein, to enable you to the performance. So that, it is not only your sins are *done away*, that is *not imputed*, or *forgiven* (*The Iniquities of* Judah, it is said, *shall be sought for, and not found*), but this Covenant hath nothing to lay to your charge. *And you that were sometimes alienated, hath he now reconciled in*

the body of his flesh, through death, to present you holy and unblameable, and unreprovable in his sight, if ye continue in the Faith, grounded and setled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel. And thus we are come to our period. We grant a perfection which Divines call *Evangelical* to the Quaker, that is an integrity of heart and life which the Gospel requires of every man that shall be saved. If these Friends will have more (who have not understood perhaps before, how much indeed this is, and what truly they impugne), then they must come to that our Divines call *Legal* righteousnes or perfection, which is to live so, as never to break any of Gods precepts, both *ratione officii, & conditionis*; and if they will maintain this, either that they have it (or have attain'd it) in themselves, or that it is necessary to others unto salvation, *I* shall tenderly offer them these ensuing Arguments, Reasons, or Considerations for reclaiming them from so desperate an opinion.

In the first place, Be it known, that in the *Diospolitan* Councel, *An. Do.* 415. this was one of *Pelagius* errours which was there Condemned. *Filios Dei non posse vocari, nisi qui omni modo absque omni peccato fuerint effecti. That they cannot be called Gods Sons, who are not in all regards, without any manner of sin.* Which errour also *Pelagius* himself there retracted.

In the second place it is worthy onr knowing, what was the ground or reason of his conviction. because it is like that the same consideration or argument may prevail upon one or other (and more then so) of this Sect, that have but the like rational judgments. *Nono fatetur filios dei posse vocari illos qui quotidie dicunt dimitte nobis debita nostra, quod & utique veraciter non dicerent, si essent omnino absque peccato. To the nineth Article, he confesses that they may be the Sons of God, who say daily, forgive us our Trespasses, which verily they could not say, if they were altogether without sin.* The Fathers of that Council urged this upon him, that if none could be born of God that were not altogether perfect, then must none of Christs Disciples be his Children; for how could they pray to him to forgive their debts, if they had no sin to be forgiven? How could they pray daily for pardon, if they were any day without transgression? *Nathaniel* was one of the Disciples of whom it is said, he was *without guile*, and con-

conſequently as perfect as any Quaker dare preſume of himſelf; and yet *Nathaniel* as well as *Peter*, and *Peter* as well as any other true Believer, are taught by theſe words of their Lord, that they have need of daily forgiveneſs. It is ſufficient to this Argument, if *that* Prayer be held but a *pattern*, and no *form*, as ſome will have it; ſo long as they do not *I* hope, yet think they may ſcratch it out of their Bibles, becauſe they leave it unſaid.

In the third place, this opinion is againſt the uniform, conſtant ſtream of Gods word, and the writings of holy men, which ſtill run thus, that we are ſinners, that we muſt all repent, and that we muſt always be renewing our repentance, in making our Prayers, Confeſſions, Supplications, Doing our Almes and other good works, and reſting on Chriſt for grace and pardon. Without this ſuppoſition, the whole courſe of our Religion as Chriſtian, will ſink for want of a foundation. *Theſe things write I to you, that you ſin not; and if any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, who is a propitiation for our ſins, and alſo for the ſins of the world.* There is *our* ſins, St. *John's* ſins, that need an Advocate as well as the world. When *Ezekiel* is picking out three of the moſt holy men that ever were (which inſtance *Auguſtine* alſo uſes) he names *Daniel*, *Noah*, and *Job*. Of *Noah* we have the record of *Moſes*, that he was overtaken. Of *Job*, we have his own acknowledgment. *If I juſtifie my ſelf, my own mouth ſhall condemn me; if I ſay I am perfect, it ſhall prove me perverſe.* Of *Daniel*, we have a whole Chapter where he is praying and confeſſing *his ſin* (as himſelf ſpeaks) *and the ſins of his people. What is man* (ſays *Eliphaz*) *that he ſhould be Clean, and he that is born of a Woman, that he ſhould be Righteous? Behold he putteth no truſt in his Saints, and the Heavens are not clean in his ſight; and how much more abominable and filthy is man, who drinketh Iniquity as water? We are all unclean* (ſays the Church, ſutably to this in *Iſay*) *and all our Righteouſneſſes are as filthy raggs.* There is one Text moſt full, as moſt common, not to be omitted, which is that of *David. Enter not into judgment with thy Servant, for in thy ſight ſhall no man living be juſtified.* This is applied by the Apoſtle againſt juſtification by the deeds of the Law. If there is, or ever was, any meer mortal on Earth that lived altogether without ſin, then muſt this Text be falſe;

then

then may some men living be justified in his sight, though he enter into district judgment with them; then may some flesh living be justified by works; then must salvation alone by Christ, and the Doctrine indeed of the whole Gospel come to the ground. For,

In the fourth place, as this is against several particular Texts before named, and the general current of the Scripture and holy Writers: So is it directly against the very drift of what the Apostle delivers to the *Romans* and *Galathians*. It is common for men to alleadg a few scattered Scriptures against any opinion which yet is true, and we Answer those Scriptures: but if an opinion does cross any one Text, and much more any Epistle in the very scope and purport of it, such an opinion must be left, or all will come to naught. It is manifest now that *Paul* in those two Epistles is setting forth the Doctrine of *justification by Faith, through our Redemption by Christ Jesus*. For the making this good, he first shews that all men whatsoever stands guilty before God of the breach of his Law. This he most industriously proves of the *Gentiles* in one Chapter; of the *Jews* in another; and in the third, *What then* (says he) *are we better than they? no, in no wise, for we have before proved both Jew and Gentile, that they are all under sin*. Upon this *Medium*, he argues, that no man therefore, either *Jew* or *Gentile* can be justified by the Law, for then they should be *doers*, and not *breakers* of it. From this truth, that they cannot be justified by the Law, it follows that there must be some other means of their justification. And this he declares (as the great concern and Gospel he has to deliver), to be by *Faith, through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus*. This is the sum of his doctrine and arguing. We may if you will for our advantage put more together. If we are justified through Christs Redemption by Faith, when none of us have performed the condition which was required of us to our justification by the Law of our Creation, then must our justification be of grace or favour, as being not else due. And if this grace is obtained or purchased for us through Christs Redemption, then is God righteous, though he accepts of us (seeing it is for Christs sake) without that condition. And if he is righteous in his accepting any without that condition, there must be some other

ther procured by Christ, upon which he accepts them, seeing all are not accepted, notwithstanding Christs Redemption. That other is Faith, as the *initium* and foundation of all other duty, that is *Faith working by Love*, even that *Love* which *fulfils the Law*, and is *shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given to us*, as *Augustine* that great assertour of grace still speaks. From hence does there appear that *Righteousness of God* which is set out in opposition to our Righteousness by the Law, and mentioned before in its due place; which indeed is nothing else but this grace it self, even the goodness, kindness, favour, or merciful condescention of God to poor Sinners, in accepting us as Righteous upon other terms, then those which the Law of our Nature requires, and it were but most just we should have performed. Which as he grants for Christs sake, so does he by his Spirit work in those that are his chosen, that all the glory of their Salvation may be due to him only. Now the perfection of the Quaker does quite over-throw all this which the Apostle teaches; and in short terms, it were all one for them to say, Sir, we deny your Argument, and your Reasoning. We are of opinion that all men do not break the Law of God, but that some are perfect in a Righteousness, answering the Law, and therefore we have no need of any such grace, or Christs Redemption (that is of any from Christ as *without*), or other terms, whereby we should be justified and saved. The Righteousness of *God*, or the Righteousness of *Faith* you speak of in opposition to *Works*, is below that of *ours*, which we build upon for our Salvation.

In the fifth place, This opinion is not consonant with the *Universality* of Redemption. There are no greater patrons of universal grace than the Quaker. This is the *excellency of his strength*, the *Ruben* of his notions. But if Christs Redemption lye altogether where they place it, in the bringing men off from Sin and Unrighteousness unto Holiness and Perfection, even such as to live without sin in this world, then cannot Redemption be universal: for the most of men remain in their sins, and are never converted; and those that are, reach not to such a pitch as this is; and consequently, instead of Christs having Redeemed all the World, or whole Man-kind, there are but very few Redeemed, and indeed none at all. I must confess I do not think

that

that the Quaker alone is in the dark about this matter. Yet theſe men I count here, are moſt of all out. They look upon the work of Chriſts Redemption to be the work of Chriſt *within*; ſo they ſpeak, and ſo they think altogether, and then wilfully confound *Sanctification* and *Redemption*; whereas Sanctification is a ſeparation of perſons from the world, and muſt be of *ſome* only, that is the *Elect* (ſuppoſing Election): but Redemption is of *all man-kind*, according to the Catechiſme, and the Scripture all over. That which Chriſt hath done for us *without*, and in the *fleſh*, is for all. He was put to death in the fleſh; his Death was for all. *He taſted Death for every man.* But what he does for us *within*, what he does in the *Spirit*, that is peculiar, and not alike to all; and the one muſt not be confounded with the other. It is worth our asking therefore, what Redemption and its immediate fruit to man-kind is? and this hath been diſpatcht in my paper about *Redemption*. The introduction of a new Covenant, and other terms for man to live by, is the main. The Quaker now does place Chriſts Redemption in bringing us up to theſe terms, the performance whereof is indeed our Goſpel-perfection; but he is here ſo miſerably out, that he both miſtakes the terms, or this perfection, as if it were no leſs then the fulfilling every jot of the Law it ſelf; & alſo contradicts himſelf in the beſt tenent he has. For how ſhall the grace of Chriſts Redemption be univerſal, if it be placed in that which is not univerſal? How ſhall Chriſts death be for *all*, if the great and immediate effect of it, be that which only belongs to the *Elect*? On the other hand, our Divines we call Orthodox, do generally ſtumble upon this ſame ſtone, in their denyal of Chriſts Redemption to be univerſal. It is not ſufficient to them for the holding Chriſts Redemption to be univerſal, that he hath procured that all may be ſaved, if they believe and repent, which are our new terms; unleſs he hath procured alſo that they believe and repent. But it is the Elect only do believe and repent, and therefore they hold the Redemption only of the Elect. Theſe men (how many of them ſoever they be) have not yet learned to diſtinguiſh the *conditien* from the *perfermance*; and that Chriſts Redemption does lye in procuring the *condition*, not *performance*, for the *world*. They know and will ſay that there is ano-

another condition required of us by the Law of our Creation, and if man may be justified without that, then must there be grace in the grant of this. And this grace they are then to understand more, is that grace which is so magnified in the Gospel, the *grace* that came by *Jesus Christ* as the *Law* by *Moses*, the grace it self of our Redemption. Let the Quaker then know it is not Christs bringing man up to the terms of God, but his bringing down God to the terms of man (that is, to such as are futable to his false estate), wherein the great work he hath done for us, is to be fixed. And let these Orthodox know the same likewise, that it must be therefore his procuring salvation upon our Faith and Repentance; and not Repentance and Faith for our Salvation, which is the direct and immediate effect of his Redemption. But what? *Is* not our Believing and Repentance then the fruit and purchase of Christs death? Be not offended Sirs, our Faith and Repentance are a fruit of his Spirit, the work of our Sanctification, and proceeds from Election. See my reasons in *p.* 29. of my first paper.

In the sixth place. *It* seems to me, that the want of more light to discern between truth and truth, is the occasion of persisting to these Friends in their errour, and to us in our opposition. *It* is true what we say, that no men but *sin*; and it is true what they say, the Regenerate *sin not*: The Scripture says both. The Child of God *sins not*, so as that sin hath *dominion* over him when he sins. The prevailing interest of his Soul is for God above the flesh and the world, and so long he is right in Gods sight; right, *Righteous*, or *Perfect*, according to the Law of *Grace*; although there be a thousand things wherein he might do more good, or less evil than he does, and so is imperfect, unrighteous, and a manifold sinner according to the Law of *work*. The truth is, there is something here at the bottom, which these men see, and our common Protestants do not see, which makes them think they see more than we, and more than they do see. *It* is this. that there can be indeed no justification of any, but according to some Law, where we can plead that we are innocent, or that we have kept that Law, and that perfectly, so that we are *Righteous* according to it. This being seen, they come on too fast, that they sin not; before they have learned to

diſtinguiſh between Law and Law, Righteouſneſs and Righteouſneſs, Juſtification and Juſtification, Sin and Sin. They ſin not, they are Righteous, and by that Righteouſneſs *I* muſt ſay with them (where they have our Divines on the blind ſide) are juſtified, to wit, according to the *Law of Faith*, or as they are judged at the Throne of Grace; but they do ſin, they are Unrighteous, and no fleſh living can be juſtified according to the *Law of Works*, or at the bar of the Ten Commandements. When the Apoſtle argues againſt juſtification by the Law, he proves none can be juſtified by it, becauſe all do break it. Thoſe that will follow truth ſhall argue as ſtrongly; if we be juſtified by grace, then we muſt be righteous and perfect, according to the *Law* of it. The Orthodox are quite out that will have any juſtified without a Righteouſneſs that is perfect according to the Law that juſtifies him (to wit, in regard to the *conditional*, though not the *preceptive* part of it). The Quaker is quite out that will have this Righteouſneſs perfect according to the ten Commandements which does not juſtifie him. The lover of Truth and Mediocrity will have every man have the Righteouſneſs of a perfect heart for his juſtification, and yet no man be juſtified but by the grace of God, through the Redemption which we have in Chriſt Jeſus. There is pardon of ſin, and juſtification; theſe may be diſtinguiſhed, not divided. Pardon refers to the law of works; juſtification to the law of Faith, or the Goſpel. *For this cauſe* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *he is the Mediatour of the New Teſtament, that by means of death for the Redemption of the Tranſgreſſions that were under the firſt Teſtament, they which are called may receive the promiſe of eternal Inheritance.* The firſt Covenant originally is that of *Nature*, and the *firſt Teſtament* belonging to the Jew, *repreſented* that firſt Covenant, and the Tranſgreſſions for which Chriſt ſhed his blood, are our ſins only againſt that Covenant: *If* there be any body ſins againſt the new Covenant, there is no Redemption for ſuch. We have a *pardon* then in reference to the law of works, but we are *juſtified* in reference to the law of Faith. To wit, *If* we are accuſed as Tranſgreſſors of the *Law*, we may confeſs it that we are guilty, and plead our pardon through Chriſts Redemption; but if we are charged as Tranſgreſſors of the *law of grace*, we muſt

must not plead our selves guilty but righteous, and such as perfectly come up to the terms required in the Gospel, or else we are gone. It is true, Christ hath purchased forgiveness, but it is upon condition. *Pardon* is of the Transgressions of the Law, but this *condition* is of Righteousness according to the Gospel, and our justification lyes in the performance of the condition.

In the seaventh place, This Opinion, instead of leading these friends to the *Spirit* and the *Life* as they speak, does lead them *from* both, and bring them back to the *letter*, and the *flesh*, and *ministration of death*. To understand this, The Apostle we know does distinguish between the *Letter* and the *Spirit*. The *Letter killeth*, *the Spirit giveth Life*. This distinction is expressed otherwhere by the *Law of the Spirit of life*, and the *Law of sin and death*. The Law of *Faith*, and Law of *Works*. The Covenant of *Nature*, and Covenant of *Grace*. The Law of Works is call'd the *Letter*, as having been writ in stone, and is the ministration of death, *the Law of sin and death*, or that which *killeth*, because there is none but break it, and so are guilty of sin and death by it. The Covenant of grace is the *Law of Faith*, that being the condition of it; it is the *Law of the spirit of life*, or the ministration of life for the contrary reason, because we are enabled through grace or this spirit, to the performance of this Law, so as to be Righteous according to it, and live by it. *The just man shall live by his Faith*. And unto the Law of the spirit of life, is added, *in Christ Jesus*, because it is he hath procured this Law for us, which is indeed the great benefit of our Redemption. Now while the Spirit is given us for the performance of the condition of this Covenant, (it being the *New Testament*, not the *Law* which is the ministration of the Spirit) it is a great mistake in these Friends to expect such help from it, as to perform the condition of the Covenant of Nature, or Law of Works. The Spirit indeed does help us, but it is to keep his own Law, the *Law of the Spirit*, and that Law whereby we may have *life*. If we do look to fulfill the Covenant of Nature, we must return to our original Righteousness, and our free will which we lost in *Adam*, and that is to go from the *Spirit* to our selves who are but *flesh*. But what? Is not the Law of God the rule of our lives? and does not the Spirit of God lead us ac-

according to rule, and bring us to a conformity to his law? I answer, no doubt of it: but that is a conformity so far as reaches the fulfilling the terms of the *Gospel*, but not those of *Works*. The law of grace does require a sincere walking before God in all his Commandements, and the Spirit of God does certainly help us so far as we sin not against that sincerity, or sin, no sins inconsistent with these terms: but the spirit is not given to bring us up to the terms of the Law, and that we should not sin at all. *What shall we say that* Abraham *as pertaining to the flesh hath found*? By the *flesh* we are to understand *works* as appears in the next verse; and so is the *spirit* opposed to the *flesh*, as it is opposed to the *law of works*. If we seek therefore for a Righteousness by our works, that is according to that law, we shall find what *Abraham* did, as *pertaining to the flesh*. We shall find no such matter. *O ye foolish Galathians* (says the Apostle) *having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?* The *Galathians* belike who had received the doctrine of grace by *Paul*, were come to be seduced to the opinion that they must keep *Moses* Law, or else they could not be saved; and this is their seeking to be made *perfect by the flesh*. The *flesh* and *nature* are Synonymous terms, and as in respect of those who were *Jews by Nature*, the works of the Law, as given by *Moses* are called flesh: so must the works of the Law, as a Covenant by Nature, be flesh in respect to the rest of man-kind. If the Quaker then is come to seek life by such a following his light as must answer the Covenant of Nature it self; that is by a perfection as is without sin against the Law, he is plainly under the notion of the *spirit*, brought at last to the *flesh* for what he seeks.

In the last place, It is an ancient saying that he who looks but one thing is easily mislead. It seems that these Friends do apprehend that our doctrine which opposes perfection does serve for the boulstring up men in their sins, and lull them into security, that though they live and dye in their wickedness, they must be saved; and this being taught especially among us Protestants, who believe that we are justified by Christs Righteousness without works, does appear very destructive to many souls, which makes them out of an intention which we may suppose zealous for godliness, and the promotion of a good life,

to

to fall on our Divines with ſo much tragical exclamation as they do on this point: When in the mean time they neither have conſidered what our Divines do ſay that removes all ground for any ſuch abuſe; nor what indeed are the conſequences of their own doctrine, which under *Pelagianiſme*, *Donatiſme*, and the like names, hath been ſo often exploded, as utterly intolerable in the Church of God. For their conviction in both theſe, *I* would not in the way have them ignorant what doctrine it was *Paul* Preached, and upon which the like conſequences was faſtened by ſome perſons at that time, that *if* grace abounded, they might therefore live in ſin: *It* is but the ſame doctrine of Gods abounding free grace, mercy, and forgiveneſs through Chriſt to poor Sinners that our Divines do bring againſt the doctrine of perfection (ſetting the unſound ſenſe of imputed Righteouſneſs aſide), which *Paul* Preached, and pleaded againſt thoſe who would bring in the works of the Law for their juſtification. And when theſe Friends have pondered the Apoſtles anſwer to what was alleadged againſt him, there will need but little more to be ſaid by us here unto the ſame. There are two things particularly our Divines teach. The one is, that notwithſtanding grace be imperfect in this life, there is no man may ſin for all that, in any the leaſt thing whatſoever: That is, though our holineſs be imperfect, yet is it our *duty* to be perfect, and we are ſtill to be preſſed to *go on to perfection*. The other is that a ſtate of grace will not ſtand with any ſin in *dominion*. That is, that whoſoever does willingly and wilfully live in any known ſin without Repentance unto death, he cannot be ſaved. And what is the reaſon then, when theſe two things are ſtill taught, that theſe men ſhould charge the Orthodox with that conſequence which they do ſo effectually diſclaim? Let them look into any practical Books of ours, and ſee if obedience, which is univerſal, be not given as the chief note ſtill of an upright man, and of that Faith which is ſaving? And what would they themſelves now ſay more? *If* this rather, without ſome [illegible] (as ſo far as human frailty, according to the ſeveral complexions, circumſtances, and temptations of perſons, by infinite goodneſs and wiſdom will be allowed) be not more ſtrict than can be borne. Will it not indeed ſuffice that a man is upright

upright before God in his *desires* and *endeavours* after perfection, that is the *having respect to all his commandments*, unless he also be perfect, and his works overtake his will? What then shall become of the generation of the most just? Let us see when this one inconvenience they apprehend as consequent to our doctrine is wiped off, whether the several inconveniences that follow their doctrine doe not require more heed.

First then, where they say our doctrine does lead men into security, remisness of life, neglect of their duty, a sinfull course: how must their doctrine hurle men into despaire, and lead them by that to the casting off the whole care of God and their souls altogether? There is no meanes under Heaven so likely to bring a man to give up all, as to make him desperate. If it will not serve a man for his acceptance with God that he is sincere in his desires and endeavours of walking before him, unless he attain to perfection, or to a life that is wholy without sin in this world, then must the heart of the most holy and mortified man upon earth be quite broke and discouraged for ever. *There is mercy with thee* (sayes David) *that thou mayst be feared*, If God were not good and merciful to consider mans frailty, to pardon his shortnesses and imperfections, and bear with him, we should not *fear* him, that is worship or serve him, for it were to no purpose to go about it, seeing we could never please him. Alas! that these folkes did but know what they do, when they bring in such doctrine, who themselves must tremble to be judged by it. O ye *foolish Galathians! who hath bewiched you*, that you should depart from that comfort and peace which some of you I believe sometimes had in believing and trusting on Christ altogether for your pardon and reconciliation with God, that you should be brought now to the works of the Law, and these terms, that if you *do them* you shall *live in them?* Is there any indeed of you think that you are able, and doe *continue in all things that are written in the book of the Law*, or in all things that are written in the *tables of your hearts* to do them? And are you ignorant that upon that account, and that alone, that none do, or are able to do so the Apostle tells you, *As many as are of the works of the Law are*

under

under the curse? Alas Sirs! what mean you, when we are under the ministration of the New-Testament, which brings the *Spirit* and *liberty* (where the Spirit is there is liberty), and *righteousnes* (for by the law of faith the Christian hath a righteousnes to plead and to be justified by) and so *life*, you should be ready to return into a *Jewish* or *Natural* bondage, to seek for it from that onely which can bring *death*, and is the ministration of sin and condemnation?

Secondly, I wish, into whatsoever consequence our doctrine may lead some of our people, that your doctrine does not lead your people into some evils more secret and spiritual, but much more deadly to the soul, then our ordinary sins are. When we shall see a person (suppose some Youth of either Sex) as soon as they are but wrought over to your party, be ready immediately to look on all the rest of people at a distance to a neglect, nay even to a contempt of the most grave, serious, holy of professours which they before conversed withall, and so talk to them as if they knew nothing streight in comparison of them, but as men altogether in the dark, without *light* or *life* were to be separated from, till they arrive to *their* attainment, or higher state. I know not what you your selves may *say* at such a sight, nor what some others may *think* who passe it by with a smile or jest at the folly, or else with wrath, scorn, and indignation at the insolence, and infinite presumption: but I for my part must professe it, as to my own soul, to be a matter of a very deep, sad, and afflictive apprehension, to behold such a *novice* falling into the *condemnation of the Devil*. Alas! what is it if the Devil himself were again in his first station that he would say, but I am now in that Seraphical state, as is above all Cherubims, Thrones, Dominions, Angells, Archangells. I am like God, and none of these are like to me. If pride, if Spiritual pride, if the most damnable pride, to be proud of Gods grace, which consists in such a monstrous overweening conceit of a mans self as this, that he is *perfect* (and in one too who hath scarce broken the shell yet in Religion), to the neglect, despising, continual censuring, and setting at naught of others, be no evil, then may the prudent, the sober, and pious amongst you who are best able to see, and to mourn for the miscarri-

ages

ages of your ſect, have leſſe reaſon to fear the tendency of this doctrine of *Perfection*: But if it be the way of Chriſtians to be humble, to look on themſelves as vile, as nothing, to live altogether on dependance upon God, each man in lowlines of mind eſteeming of others better then themſelves, then will it be your duty to have more care of what you are to rebuke, and of what you are to teach. *Leaſt that which is lame be turned out of the way, and that which is weak be deſtroyed.*

Laſt of all, There is the danger, that exceeding danger in the very entainment of this opinion, that I am afraid at my heart it cannot conſiſt (if prevalent) with the grace of God, and juſtification of a ſinner by Chriſt. It is a high text, that of the Apoſtle. *Behold I Paul ſay unto you that if you be circumciſed Chriſt ſhall profit you nothing.* Circumciſion was a bond to the keeping the whole law, and if the *Galathians* upon the opinion that the Law muſt be kept for their juſtification were circumciſed, they are like as it ſeemes here to bring themſelves into that condition as to ſtand or fall by it. Let them look to it then, if they break but one of the commandements, to the whole whereof they are debtors, the bond is forfeit. The like inſtance is that we have in the *Jews* themſelves. God had given them his Law, which was indeed to direct them in a holy life; but the chief end of it was through conviction of ſin to drive them to God for his pardon and grace, which was to be received through the promiſe, by their Faith. Now the *Jews* being ignorant of this end, look to the Law only for Righteouſneſs, and are loſt. I am really afraid at my very heart Sirs, leaſt your caſe be the very ſame in effect with theſe. You have the Goſpel Preached, and if you accept of your pardon through Chriſt there is no more required, but the walking ſincerely before him, and acknowledging him your *Advocate* if you ſin, and you may be ſafe; but you have taken up an opinion that the whole Law muſt be kept, that you muſt live without ſin, and unleſs you come up to this pitch, you cannot be ſaved. What is here then, I ſay, but ſuch an Opinion as that of the *Galathians*, and ſuch an eſtabliſhing of your own Righteouſneſs as the *Jews* was; only with this difference indeed in both, that it is *more*. For the Righteouſneſs of the Law, as given by

Moſes,

Moſes, was not thought by them ſo ſtrict as we know it to be, as given by *Nature*. And if they ſhall ſtand for their lives upon theſe terms, who is not apprehenſive of the danger of ſuch Doctrine? *For I teſtifie again to every man, that whoſoever of you are juſtified by the Law, ye are fallen from Grace.* I remember when Feſtus had brought *Paul* out to *Agrippa*, and he had opened and pleaded his cauſe before him, *Agrippa* ſaid unto *Feſtus*, *This man might have been ſet at liberty, if he had not appealed to Cæſar.* If theſe Friends, being at the Bar of the Goſpel, would ſtand to that grace we have there, they might be freed by courſe with other honeſt Chriſtian folks, through the Redemption which is in Chriſt Jeſus. Who hath any thing to charge upon them? But if they will appeal from thoſe terms under which we are brought by Chriſt, unto their perfection, which is the terms of the Law, to be judged by that; what can we ſay elſe, but they have appealed unto *Cæſar*, and to *Cæſar* muſt they go. Unto your perfection you have appealed, and when you ſhall be found imperfect, as all fleſh living muſt be, what ſhall become of you before the great Tribunal of God? O Lord! Thou ſeeſt mans fooliſhneſs, and knoweſt his danger. If any of theſe poor people are indeed upon ſuch a precipice, as my Soul fears for them, deliver them, ſave them from it, bring them to a right mind, that they may not depart from thy grace, to go to their own Ciſterns. *They went to the Wells, and there was no Water; they returned with their Veſſels empty, and were aſhamed.* We have a ſingular preſident in *Job*. A man may wonder ſometimes why God ſhould deal ſo ſeverely with that Saint. It was not perhaps without cauſe. *Job* was a holy perſon, and he knew it, he ſtood upon it; and it is poſſible he might by that temper of his, be one who in the eſtabliſhing this *Righteouſneſs of his own*, was apt to forget to ſubmit to the *Righteouſneſs of God*, and that this was the very ſecret cauſe which makes him have need of ſo ſufficient a courſe to be taken for reducing him out of that danger. Friends! Let me ſpeak to you here in thoſe words which *Eliphaz* did to his Friend. Surely you have ſpoken in my hearing, and *I* have heard the voyce of your words, ſaying, *We are Clean without Tranſgreſſion; we are Innocent, neither is there Iniquity in us.* Let me then ſpeak to you in the words al-

ſo of God. *Who are theſe that darken Counſel with words without knowledge? I* humbly beſeech the Lord, that what is offered here unto you, to the like end (ſuppoſing the end of the Lord to *Job*, herein to be ſuch), may be received with the like effect. That you may ſay, *Behold we are vile, what ſhall we anſwer thee? we will lay our hands on our mouths. Once have we ſpoken, but we will not anſwer; yea twice, but we will proceed no further.*

Auguſtine. Cont. Ep. Parmen. l. 2. c. 6.

Quamvis in quantum ex deo nati ſumus non peccemus, ineſt tamen adhuc etiam quod ex Adamo nati ſumus. Et quamdiu expectamus per patientiam corporis noſtri redemptionem, non audeamus dicere carere nos omni vitio, ne ipſa ſuperbia ſit immaniſſimum vitium. *Although in ſo much as we are born of God, we ſin not, yet does there remain in us that too, which is born of* Adam; *and ſo long as we, through patience, do wait for the Redemption of the body, we dare not ſay that we are without all ſin, leaſt that very Pride it ſelf be a moſt monſtrous ſin.*

The End.

An Advertiſement.

Reader,

I Intended more Papers under this Title of the *Middle Way*; but being Diſcouraged, this (I ſuppoſe) is the laſt. You have one Paper of *Election* and *Redemption*, put that firſt: Another of *Juſtification*: A third of the *Covenants*, *Law*, and *Goſpel*: And this fourth of *Perfection*. Expect no more. The Bookſeller now will Bind them together. The letters (*N. B.*) are *Nota bene*. *Valete omnes*, *& condonate.*

Deo Gloria. I. H